

Message Text

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S E C R E T STOCKHOLM 2893

NODIS

STATE FOR EAGLEBURGER ONLY

STATE PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR SCOWCROFT ONLY

OSLO FOR HARTMAN FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: SECVISIT - SWEDEN

REF: SECTO 13029

1. I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSSON THIS MORNING TO EXPRESS USG CONCERN OVER IMPACT ON (A) US-SWEDISH RELATIONS AND (B) ON US POLITICAL SCENE OF VISIBLE DEMONSTRATIONS IN STOCKHOLM AGAINST VISIT OF SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER. I EMPHASIZED THAT OUR CONCERN WAS NOT RPT NOT ABOUT THE PHYSICAL SECURITY OF THE SECRETARY AND HIS PARTY, SINCE WE HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY OF SWEDISH POLICE TO CONTROL THE DEMONSTRATORS. WHAT DID TROUBLE US DEEPLY, I SAID, WAS UNFAVORABLE IMAGE WHICH WOULD BE CREATED BY PICTURES OF LARGE NUMBERS OF PERSONS PROTESTING AGAINST VISIT, PICTURES WHICH WOULD APPEAR IN US PRESS ON EVE OF IMPORTANT PRIMARY ELECTIONS IN US. THESE PICTURES WOULD WRONGLY CREATE IMPRESSION THAT US SECRETARY OF STATE WAS NOT WELCOME IN SWEDEN AND THAT LARGE SECTOR OF SWEDISH PUBLIC OPPOSED VISIT. THEREFORE, I CONCLUDED, WE WISHED FOREIGN MINISTER'S ASSESSMENT OF WHETHER, IN VIEW OF ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, VISIT SHOULD BE POSTPONED FOR LATER DATE.

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WM FOREIGN MINISTER, SPEAKING WITH UTMOST SERIOUSNESS, SAID THAT DEMONSTRATIONS WERE ORGANIZED BY THE MILITANT COMMUNISTS IN SWEDEN, WHO REPRESENTED A TINY MINORITY OF SWEDISH PUBLIC OPINION. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE 5,000 OR SOMEWHAT MORE YOUNG PERSONS WHO WILL DEMONSTRATE. IF VISIT WERE POSTPONED, IT WOULD BE A GREAT VICTORY FOR THE EXTREME LEFT, HE CONTINUED. HE CONCLUDED HIS COMMENTS WITH EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT VISIT NOT RPT NOT BE CANCELLED.

3. I THEN ASKED ANDERSSON WHAT STEPS HE WAS PREPARED TO TAKE TO COUNTER THE UNFAVORABLE IMAGE WHICH MIGHT BE CREATED BY DEMONSTRATIONS. I SAID WE HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBLE STEPS AT EMBASSY, AND HAD CONCLUDED THAT THERE WERE TWO ACTIONS GOS COULD TAKE WHICH MIGHT HELP OFFSET UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY. ONE WOULD BE FOR PRIME MINISTER PALME PERSONALLY TO COME TO ARLANDA AIRPORT TO GREET SECRETARY, AND TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED MEETING SECRETARY, AND SECONDLY, FOR POLICE TO PREVENT MARCHERS FROM CONVERGING ON US EMBASSY AND INSTEAD DIVERT THEM TO SHEEP MEADOW HALF MILE AWAY. LATTER STEP, I SAID, WOULD AT LEAST AVOID PICTURES OF US EMBASSY BESEIGED BY DEMONSTRATORS, WHICH COULD CREATE FALSE IMPRESSION THAT USG UNPOPULAR IN SWEDEN.

4. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE WOULD TAKE BOTH PROPOSALS UP WITH PRIME MINISTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (PALME IS NOW IN TELEVISION STUDIO TAPING DEBATE WITH OPPOSITION LEADER AND WILL BE UNAVAILABLE UNTIL LATER THIS AFTERNOON). HE PROMISED TO ADVISE ME OF PRIME MINISTER'S REACTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THEIR DISCUSSION. HE CONTINUED THAT IT WOULD BE DISASTER IF A TINY MINORITY DETERMINED THE CONDUCT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO NATIONS. THE SECRETARY, HE STRESSED, IS 'VERY WELCOME' IN SWEDEN.

5. I REPLIED THAT I UNDERSTOOD THAT, BUT IT WAS UP TO GOS TO DEMONSTRATE IT EFFECTIVELY. I SAID WE WOULD WELCOME ANY OTHER CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS HE OR PRIME MINISTER HAD TO CONTRIBUTE TO THAT POSITIVE IMPRESSION. I CONCLUDED THAT I WOULD IMMEDIATELY RELAY RESULTS OF MY DISCUSSION WITH HIM TO THE SECRETARY, AND SAID I WOULD BE

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AWAITING FURTHER WORD FROM HIM ON RESULTS OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PALME.

6. AS I LEFT, ANDERSSON AGAIN REITERATED HIS HOPE THAT 'VISIT ABSOLUTELY NOT BE POSTPONED.' I ALSO RAISED SUBJECT WITH SWEDISH AMBASSADOR TO US WACHTMEISTER AND WILL CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS ON THIS QUESTION WITH HIM THIS NOON.

7. IN LIGHT OF SECRETARY'S CONCERNS, AND ANDERSSON'S REACTIONS, FOLLOWING IS MY ASSESSMENT OF RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS, CONCURRED IN BY COUNTRY TEAM. FIRST, AS TO DEMONSTRATIONS, THESE WILL BE HELD AND PUBLICIZED WHETHER OR NOT THE SECRETARY'S VISIT IS POSTPONED. DEMONSTRATIONS WILL CONSIST OF ORGANIZED RALLY AND MARCH ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON WELL BEFORE SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL, AND ISOLATED INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL GROUPS WITH PLACARDS OR SHOUTING SLOGANS IN ONE OR ANOTHER PART OF STOCKHOLM ON MONDAY. WE EXPECT LATTER TO AMOUNT TO VERY LITTLE, BUT INEVITABLY ENOUGH FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS. SUNDAY AFTERNOON AFFAIR LIKELY TO INVOLVE MAXIMUM 7,000 AND PERHAPS FEWER THAN 5,000 MARCHERS, REPRESENTING ALL-OUT EFFORT BY EXTREMISTS WHO HAVE SEEN THEIR ACTIVE SYMPATHIZERS DWINDLING IN PAST TWO YEARS. DURING VIETNAM WAR, DEMONSTRATORS FREQUENTLY NUMBERED 15,000 PERSONS.

8. DEMONSTRATION PLANNED FOR SUNDAY, MAY 23, ATMOSPHERICALLY, HAS ALL THE HALLMARKS OF A LAST HURRAH. WE BELIEVE GOS WILL DO ITS UTMOST TO DISCOURAGE THESE DEMONSTRATORS SINCE ANY UNPLEASANTNESS CONNECTION WITH SECRETARY'S VISIT COULD DAMAGE PALME POLITICALLY AT A TIME IN THE SWEDISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN WHEN HIS PARTY IS TRAILING. THE DEMONSTRATORS ARE COMMUNISTS AND RADICALS ON THE FRINGES OF SWEDISH SOCIETY AND EFFECTIVELY BEYOND PALME'S INFLUENCE. THE RIGHT TO DEMONSTRATE IS AS SOLIDLY ESTABLISHED IN SWEDEN AS IN THE UNITED STATES, SO THAT THE GOS IS LIMITED EFFECTIVELY TO INSURING THAT THE DEMONSTRATION REMAINS NON-VIOLENT.

9. IF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO STOCKHOLM WERE TO BE
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SCRATCHED AS A RESULT OF SOME HIGHLY VISIBLE AND CREDIBLE EMERGENCY THE NEGATIVE IMPACT IN SWEDEN, AND HENCE, TO A NONCONSIDERABLE DEGREE ELSEWHERE, COULD BE LIMITED. OTHERWISE, CANCELLATION WOULD BE A GREAT PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST TO THE EXTREME LEFT IN SWEDEN AND WOULD BE LIKELY TO HAVE MUCH GREATER REPERCUSSIONS IN THE US AND ABROAD THAN THE REPERCUSSIONS WE CAN EXPECT FROM A VISIT MARKED BY DEMONSTRATIONS.

10. I AM FULLY COGNIZANT OF THE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH FAVOR CANCELLATION OF VISIT. HOWEVER, AFTER WEIGHING THESE FACTORS CAREFULLY AND AFTER EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH MY SENIOR STAFF, I AM PERSUADED THAT THE UNFAVORABLE REPERCUSSIONS TO OUR INTERESTS AND TO THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY'S IMAGE FROM A LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION

WOULD BE GREATER THAN ANY FALL-OUT FROM PUBLICITY GIVEN TO DEMONSTRATORS WHO, AS FOREIGN MINISTER RIGHTLY SAID, REPRESENT A TINY FRACTION OF THE SWEDISH PUBLIC. THEREFORE, IF PALME DOES TAKE STEPS WE RECOMMEND IN PARA 3 ABOVE -- AND I THINK HE WILL -- I RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY MAKE VISIT AS SCHEDULED.

11. I BELIEVE UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY FROM DEMONSTRATIONS COULD ALSO BE EFFECTIVELY COUNTERED BY SECRETARY'S BRIEFING AMERICAN PRESS CORRESPONDENTS ON PLANE ENROUTE TO STOCKHOLM. SECRETARY COULD POINT OUT THAT (A) DEMONSTRATORS ARE MOSTLY "PROFESSIONAL" DEMONSTRATORS, COMMUNIST IN ORIGIN, WHO REPRESENT ONLY TINY SEGMENT OF SWEDISH PUBLIC OPINION (B) THAT SWEDISH GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE STRONGLY ENDORSE FRIENDSHIP WITH US AND WELCOME VISIT OF SECRETARY, AS DEMONSTRATED BY FACT THAT PRIME MINISTER, DISREGARDING PROTOCOL, WILL BE AT AIRPORT TO GREET SECRETARY.

12. ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE TRANSMITTED FOR YOUR DECISION.
SMITH

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